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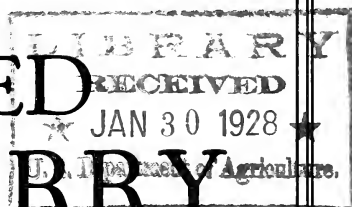
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1890

1928

# PURE BRED STRAWBERRY PLANTS



*Grown in a Natural Strawberry Climate by*

## W. W. THOMAS CO.

Strawberry Plant Farms

ANNA, ILLINOIS

SEASON 1928

38th YEAR

# Greetings To Our Friends!

Another growing season is before us, and we are glad to meet our horticultural friends again. If you are one of our old customers, we are pleased to renew your acquaintance. If you are a prospective new customer, we are very glad indeed to have this opportunity to serve you, and we hope the associationship we are beginning will last many years and prove mutually advantageous to both of us.

Our business was established 38 years ago by W. W. Thomas, who had great faith in the future of this wonderful country of ours and who recognized the ideal conditions which prevail in Union County, Illinois, for growing strawberry, asparagus, rhubarb and horseradish plants.

When an all-wise Providence took Mr. Thomas into the great beyond a few years ago, it devolved upon R. E. Blaylock, son-in-law of Mr. Thomas, to become general manager and president, and to take up the reins of the business. Bringing into the work the spirit and vigor and resourcefulness of youth, he has endeavored to maintain the standards established by the founder of the business, and he has steadily developed the organization in keeping with the growth of American business and the country in general.

Strawberries, of course, are our leading specialty, and it is needless to say that we are highly enthusiastic about this fruit. We think strawberries are the greatest fruit on earth. Izaak Walton, repeating Dr. Boteler, said many years ago, "Doubtless, God could have made a better berry than the strawberry, but, doubtless, God never did." That statement is as true today as it ever was.

## The Universal Fruit

Everybody likes strawberries, and no one ever got tired of them. They will grow successfully in practically every soil and climate in the country and in many parts of Canada and Alaska; no fruit will succeed under such a wide variety of conditions. It is a particularly good crop for home gardens, in which high quality products are desired and in which every foot of ground must be made to count. Market gardeners will find the crop profitable on the highest priced land, and it will fit in nicely with other crops and with labor conditions of the locality. The strawberry is a wonderful crop for boys' and girls' club work and for growing in vacant city lots and other land by persons who want to make some easy money on the side. Fruit growers will find the crop well fitted for growing in young orchards. Many growers have paid the cost of bringing their trees to fruiting condition with strawberries. Many farmers have started a faithful son or daughter on the road to profit and success by turning over to him a half acre or an acre of land and buying

him plants for the same. Commercial strawberry growers do not need to be told about this crop. They know that with the population increasing and with such things as roadside marketing rapidly developing, there are almost unlimited opportunities in strawberry growing.

## Good Planting Stock

The weather last season, as you well know, was not all it might have been. Rains and floods in the spring were a real problem. However, because of our wonderful soil and our facilities for taking advantage of every favorable opportunity, we carried our plans through in spite of all obstacles. We are, therefore, in position to offer you as good planting stock as we have ever produced—stock we know will give you good results.

W. W. THOMAS CO.,

R. E. BLAYLOCK,  
*President and  
General Manager.*



At the Left—W. W. Thomas, "The Strawberry Plant Man," and originator of the idea of developing better strawberries by plant selection. Established the business at Makanda, Illinois in 1890, moving to Anna, Illinois in 1900.



At the Right—R. E. Blaylock, President and General Manager of W. W. Thomas Strawberry Plant Farms, now active head of the business.

# Nine Good Reasons



**A**S YOU are now going to grow strawberries, you want to get the best results possible. No factor is more important in this connection than starting with good plants, for the plants contain within themselves the driving power, or lack of driving power, which results in good or poor crops of strawberries, as the case may be. No matter how well you may care for your plants, and no matter how well fitted for strawberries your location and soil may be, your efforts will come to naught if you fail to start with plants that carry within their tissues that indefinable something that results in vigorous growth of plants and large yields of handsome berries. We refer not to variety differences but to the qualities carried by the individual plants, no matter what the variety may be.

We are positive that *Thomas pure-bred plants* fulfill these requirements. The results obtained by our thousands of satisfied customers, located in all parts of the country and in foreign countries, prove beyond doubt that *Thomas plants* do possess the driving power that brings success. This is not the result of chance. It is the result of growing the plants by the very best methods known to science, and in a climate and soil that are

perfectly adapted for strawberries. There are nine good reasons why *Thomas pure-bred plants* are the best that can be obtained, as follows:

## Long Experience

First, our long experience and our knowledge of every detail of strawberry plant growing and handling is a factor of no small importance to you. We are not experimenting with the plants we ship you. We learned long ago just how they have got to be grown and handled to give you the best results. Such plants are superior to those grown and handled by beginners in this complicated business, and it will pay you to plant this kind.

## We Specialize

Second, we specialize in growing strawberry plants for sale. We do not grow the crop for fruit and then sell plants as a side line, as many strawberry plant growers do. The only strawberry plants which ever bear fruit on our farms are the small lots of 25 each which we grow every year in our testing and proving beds. This policy insures that you will get plants true to variety. There is no chance, under our methods, that any of the plants will be chance seedlings from seeds of wasted berries, as often occurs when plants are taken from a patch which

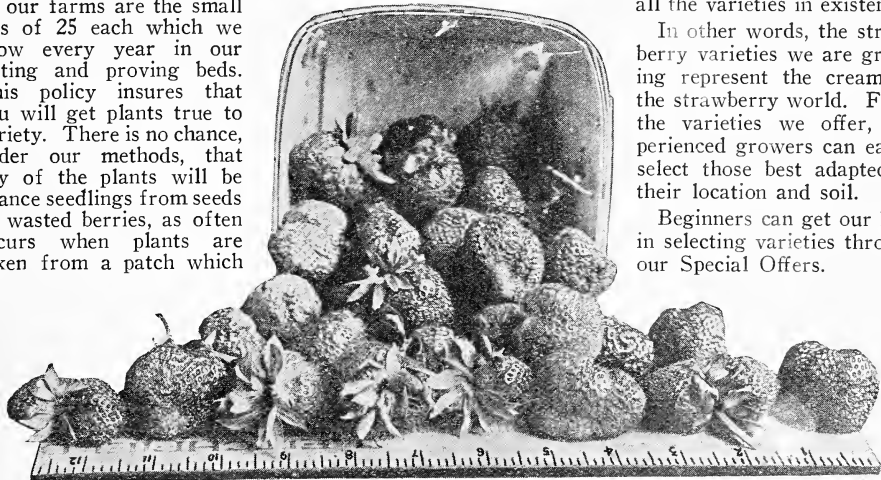
has fruited or in which the blossom clusters were not completely removed the previous season.

## Only the Best

Third, we specialize on the best varieties of strawberries. There are hundreds of varieties catalogued in the country. Only a few are worth planting. Some catalogued varieties never were worth growing; others have been superseded by better varieties. Out of this maze of varieties, we have selected, as a result of our long experience and study, the few which give the very best results in the different sections of the country. We are sure that with this policy in operation we can give better attention to our plants and render better service to our customers than if we tried to grow all the varieties in existence.

In other words, the strawberry varieties we are growing represent the cream of the strawberry world. From the varieties we offer, experienced growers can easily select those best adapted to their location and soil.

Beginners can get our help in selecting varieties through our Special Offers.



## A Good Location

Fourth, we are growing our plants in a climate and soil wonderfully adapted to strawberries. Anna, located in Union County, Illinois, is about half way between the Gulf of Mexico and the Canadian border. Plants grown here are never weakened in vitality by the extreme cold that often prevails in northern sections or by the heat and drought which occurs in more southern localities. Plants grown here have the benefit of a long growing season, of a liberal rainfall, of bright sunshine, and of a deep, loess soil laid down by Mother Nature centuries ago that is held by leading horticulturists to be one of the best fruit soils in existence. Large commercial acreages are grown at Anna, Cobden, Dongola and Villa Ridge, all located within a few miles. The great strawberry centers of Kentucky, Tennessee and Arkansas are only a short distance away, and the conditions are exactly like those prevailing at Anna. Our farms are located in the fertile valley formed by Dutch Creek, which we have protected from overflow by suitable levees. Here the strawberry finds ideal conditions for its best growth.

## Thoroughly Tested

Fifth, we exercise every known precaution to keep our varieties and strains at the highest state of perfection. Every spring we select the very choicest and healthiest plants of each variety from the thousands of plants that we grow, and these are used for growing the next crop of plants. This process, followed year after year, permits us to perpetuate our varieties and strains from the best and healthiest plants, and if it is possible to improve a variety by continued selection of this kind, we, and you as well, get the benefit of it.

To still further protect the interests of our customers, we take 25 representative plants from each breeding bed every spring and bring these to fruiting in a special plat that receives our most searching attention. Here, the plants are studied in detail throughout the growing and fruiting period. If any of them prove off-type or defective in any way, the entire lot of breeding plants of the variety is discarded, and new stock is secured to perpetuate the variety. We will not betray the interests of our customers by selling them stock about which there is any question whatever.

## Healthy and Vigorous

Sixth, our plants are healthy and vigorous. Our soil and climate produce strong, healthy plants, but we improve on Nature's methods by applying good methods of fertilization and cultivation. We also spray all of our strawberries regularly throughout the season. This usually is unnecessary, since insects and diseases rarely give trouble in our natural strawberry climate, but we spray the plants as a precaution. Strong, healthy plants, as well as plants true to variety, are extremely important in producing strawberries successfully.

## Finest Equipment

Seventh, we are using the best equipment and facilities known for growing and handling strawberry plants. We have enriched our soil until it can be made no better for the purpose. We have every tool that can be used to advantage. We have plenty of the best arranged warehouses, storage houses and other facilities for handling plants and supplies.

## Expert Force

Eighth, we have a large, well-organized crew of highly trained and experienced helpers, both in the field and in our offices. Such help cannot be developed on short notice. It takes years of persistent effort, of careful planning, and of consideration for the rights and lives of others, to develop an organization of the kind we have. Plants grown and handled by such an organization can be planted with greater confidence than those obtained from many sources.

## Shipping Facilities

Ninth, shipping facilities at Anna are of the very best. The Illinois Central and Mobile and Ohio Railroads both run through that point, thus giving excellent outlets and connections in all directions. Both freight and express shipments are handled by both railroads. We enjoy the fullest and heartiest co-operation of the railroad and express employees in handling and shipping our plants.

## We Specialize in Asparagus, Rhubarb and Horseradish Also

What we have said about strawberries applies also to asparagus, rhubarb and horseradish plants. We are specialists in growing these also; in fact, we specialize only on plants particularly adapted to the climate and soil of our section.

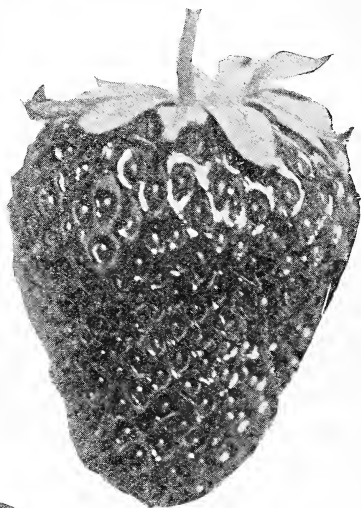


# Strawberries for Pleasure and Profit

## Senator Dunlap (S) Medium

The Senator Dunlap is one of the old standbys among strawberry varieties. It is grown under more conditions and by more people than any other variety. The berries are of high quality and handsome appearance, closely resembling the Warfield in color, shape and time of ripening. Because of their fine rich flavor, they are wonderfully adapted for home gardens and for canning, yet on account of their handling and shipping qualities, they are equally good for market. The fruit always sells for high prices. The plants are vigorous growers, excellent runner producers, hardy, healthy, productive, and highly drought resistant. They will give a good account of themselves almost everywhere with half a chance. They are good self-pollenizers and bear well when planted alone.

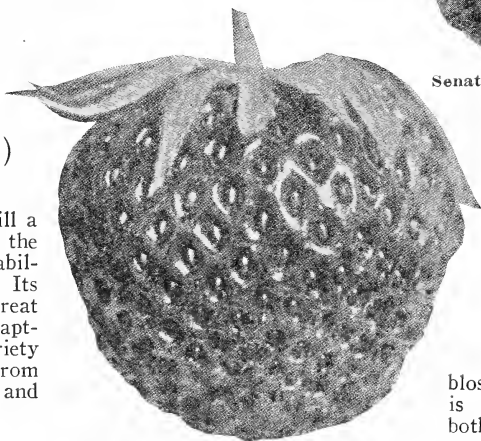
Northern growers will make no mistake in placing the Dunlap at the head of their list, either for home use or for market. If you want to plant only one variety, we recommend this one.



Senator Dunlap (S) Medium

## Klondike (S) Medium

The Klondike is still a popular variety in the South because of its ability to return profits. Its strong points are its great productivity, its adaptability to a great variety of soils, its freedom from disease, the firm flesh and



Klondike (S) Medium

deep, rich color of its fruit, and its market, shipping and canning qualities. Any berry that possesses so many good characteristics is bound to be popular.

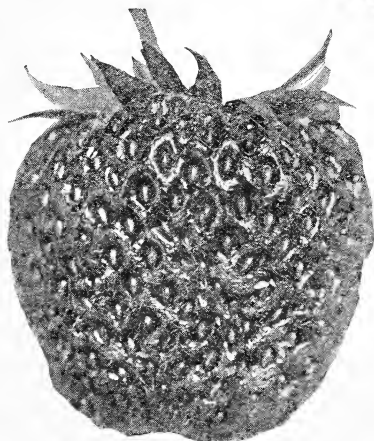
The heavy, dark green leaves and long rank stems are a big help in protecting the blossoms from frost, which is of great importance to both home and commercial growers. We have more than once seen the Klondike escape frost injury when

other varieties growing beside it suffered badly.

Our original stock of the Klondike was obtained 25 years ago, the year after the variety was first introduced. We have taken great care to maintain it in absolutely pure condition, and we are sure that *Thomas Pure Bred Plants* of this variety are as good as can be obtained.

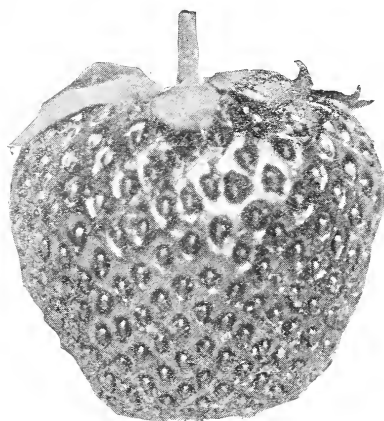
## Aroma (S) Late

The Aroma is one of the best late varieties for both northern and southern sections. It is the one variety that comes nearest to being fitted for both the North and South. It is especially well adapted for the belt of territory several hundred miles north and south of the Mason and Dixon line.



Aroma (S) Late

See pages 16 and 17 for our special offers to home growers and commercial growers.



Gandy (S) Late

### Gandy (S) Late

The Gandy is one of the best and most popular late varieties. It succeeds under a great variety of conditions and will thrive practically anywhere. It is probably better suited to heavy or bottom soils than to light soils. The berries are large, smooth, of excellent shape, firm, rich red in color, and of good quality. The fruit keeps and ships unusually well and retains its color when canned. The plants are strong growers, healthy, productive and good runner producers. The large, thick stems hold the fruit well off the ground. The Gandy is a perfect flowered variety, but it does best when some other variety is interplanted with it. We recommend Aroma for this purpose.

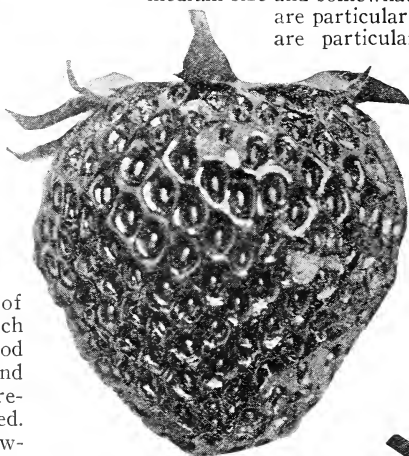
### Missionary (S) Early

The Missionary is practically the only variety grown in Florida. It is the berry which attracts so much attention in northern markets during the winter and early spring. The Missionary gives excellent success in all the southern states. The plants are tall, healthy, vigorous, productive, and good runner producers. The berries are of fine color, excellent flavor, medium to large in size, well-colored to the center, juicy and firm. They are good shippers and ripen much earlier than the fruit of the Klondike. We recommend the Missionary particularly for planting by southern growers from Florida to California.

The fruit is large and uniform in size and of dark, rich color extending all the way through the berries. The berries have wonderful shipping and keeping quality and are equally good for eating from the vines, for home use, for canning, or for shipping. No variety will ship better or for longer distances. The berries begin to ripen a little earlier than those of the Gandy and continue to ripen throughout the Gandy season. The Aroma is a good plant producer, healthy, very productive and stands drought well. The plants are of medium vigor and size and have smooth, glossy leaves. You will make no mistake in planting the Aroma, especially if you live within reasonable distance of the Mason and Dixon line.

### Lady Thompson (S) Medium

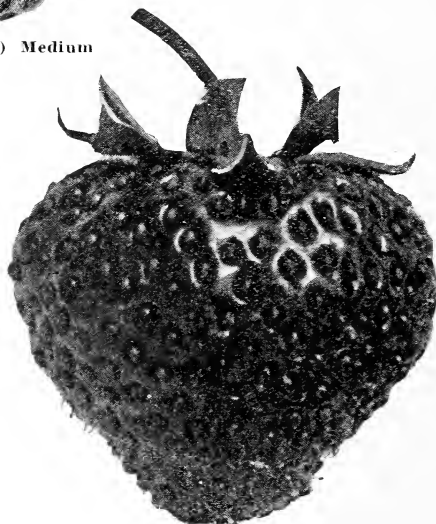
The Lady Thompson is another great southern strawberry. It originated in North Carolina and has been very popular in the Southeast. The fruit is of medium size and somewhat light in color. The berries are particularly good shippers. The plants are particularly good drought resisters and are very productive. The variety is grown extensively in the South and in southern California.



Lady Thompson (S) Medium

Read our directions for growing strawberries on pages 12 to 25.

Our price list on page 26 gives prices on all our varieties in different quantities for both home and commercial growers.



Missionary (S) Early



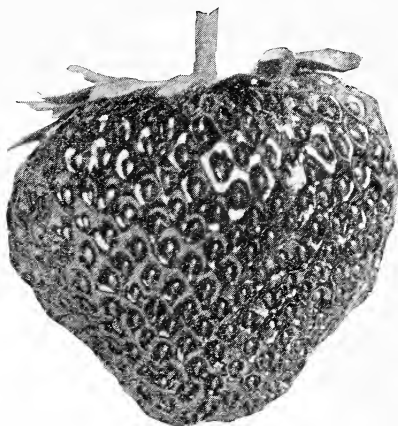
## Excelsior (S) Early

The Excelsior is particularly valuable for its very early fruit, which has a good flavor and keeps and ships remarkably well. It is more popular in the South perhaps than in other sections. The plants are quite productive and healthy, and they are good runner producers. For an extra early berry, and particularly for experienced growers in southern sections, the Excelsior will give satisfaction.

## Dr. Burrill (S) Mid-Season

The Dr. Burrill is a companion to the Dunlap, the two having been originated by Rev. J. R. Reasoner of Urbana, Ill. The variety is a worthy memorial to the great horticulturist and botanist for whom it was named. It resulted from a cross between Crescent and Dunlap. Dr. Burrill is one of the best mid-season varieties in existence. The plants are strong and healthy. They are good plant producers, and they are very productive. The fruit is medium to large in size, well-shaped and of rich, dark color through and through. The foliage is heavy and healthy and conspicuously free from disease at all times, thus enabling the variety to succeed where many others fail. You will make no mistake in planting the Dr. Burrill.

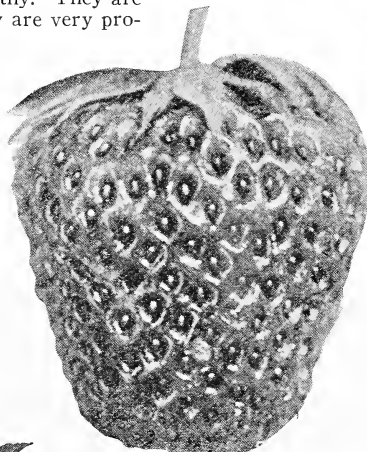
We specialize on rhubarb, asparagus, and horseradish, also; see description and prices on pages 26, 29, 30 and 31.



Excelsior (S) Early

## Michel's (S) Early

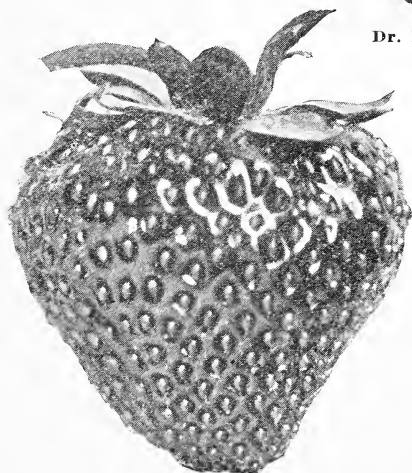
This variety is particularly well known in the South, where it has been a standard shipper for many years. The berries are of medium size, evenly colored, and have a rich, mild flavor. The flesh is very firm, and the berries are splendid shippers. The plants are particularly good runner producers; in fact, they produce too many runners under some conditions. The foliage is noticeably healthy and light green in color. The plants are rather tall growers.



Dr. Burrill (S) Mid-Season

## Chesapeake (S) Late

This variety originated in Maryland and is very popular along the Atlantic Coast. Its distinctive features are vigor and health of plants, and fine appearance and high quality of the fruit. The berries are very smooth and unusually plump and bright in color. The dark red flesh has a very pleasant aroma. The berries ripen uniformly all over and are quite free from green tips. The large strong stems hold the fruit off the ground. The fruit is of about the same size as that of the Gandy, but firmer and of better quality, and the plants are more productive. The Chesapeake is one of the best late strawberries for both home use and market, and we recommend it for your consideration.



Chesapeake (S) Late



Tennessee Prolific (S) (Medium)

### Tennessee Prolific (S) Medium

The Tennessee Prolific is a vigorous, thrifty grower and produces sure crops of fine quality fruit. It will give good results both for home use and for market. The berries are medium to large in size, bright crimson in color and of a somewhat elongated shape. The flesh is fine-grained and very juicy. The variety is popular for canning purposes, and its shipping qualities are generally recognized. The plants are vigorous, healthy, productive and bear runners liberally.

### Gibson (S) Midseason

The Gibson is very popular in northern states in the Great Lakes region. We do not advise this variety for planting in the South. The fruit is large, juicy and delicious, and somewhat conical in shape. The berries are dark red in color, quite firm and hold their size to the end of the picking season. The plants are very vigorous growers, they are quite hardy, and they have a good root system. A leading mar-

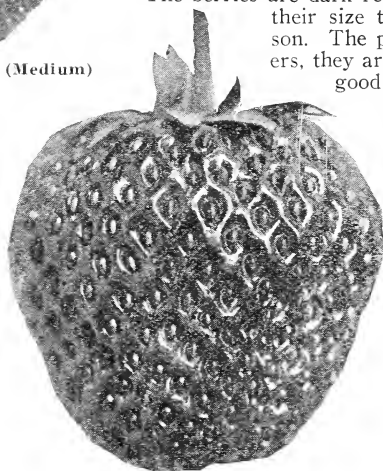
ket strawberry for the past ten or fifteen years. Perfect flowering, strong pollinizer. Can be grown alone as well as with others.

Our directions for growing strawberries were carefully prepared and contained the best known information on the subject. If you follow these directions, your strawberries will be a success.

### Brandywine (S) Late

This variety has truly earned the popularity it enjoys. The fruit is large, deep red in color, firm in texture and of delicious flavor. The flesh is somewhat cream-colored in the center. The plants are vigorous and productive and are fairly good runner producers. It has a good root system and endures dry weather quite well.

Well adapted to home use and canning due to its dark red color, flavor and texture. These same qualities make it a favorite for market as well.

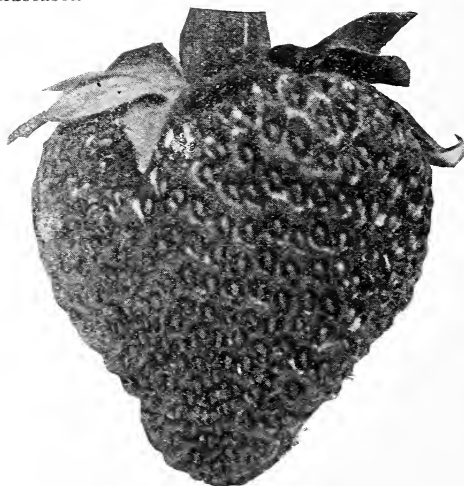


Gibson (S) Midseason

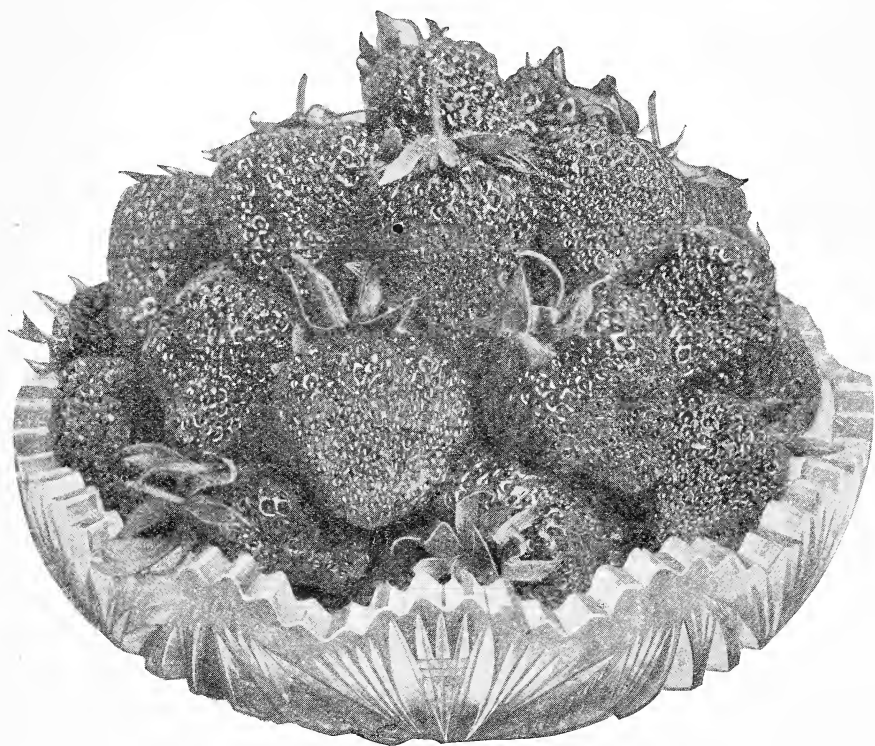
### Premier (S) Early

The Premier, also called the Howard, is a worthy competitor of the Dunlap; in fact, some persons like it better. The berries resemble those of the Dunlap but are a little lighter in color. They are of large size, quite juicy and of good quality. The plants are healthy, vigorous, productive and have a long bearing season. The variety does not set plants as readily as some varieties, but it is a heavy bearer of fine fruit. This variety is increasing in popularity.

In most localities the Premier is the earliest strawberry ever produced. It is frost resistant in both bud and blossom.



Brandywine (S) Late



## Lady Corneille (S) Medium

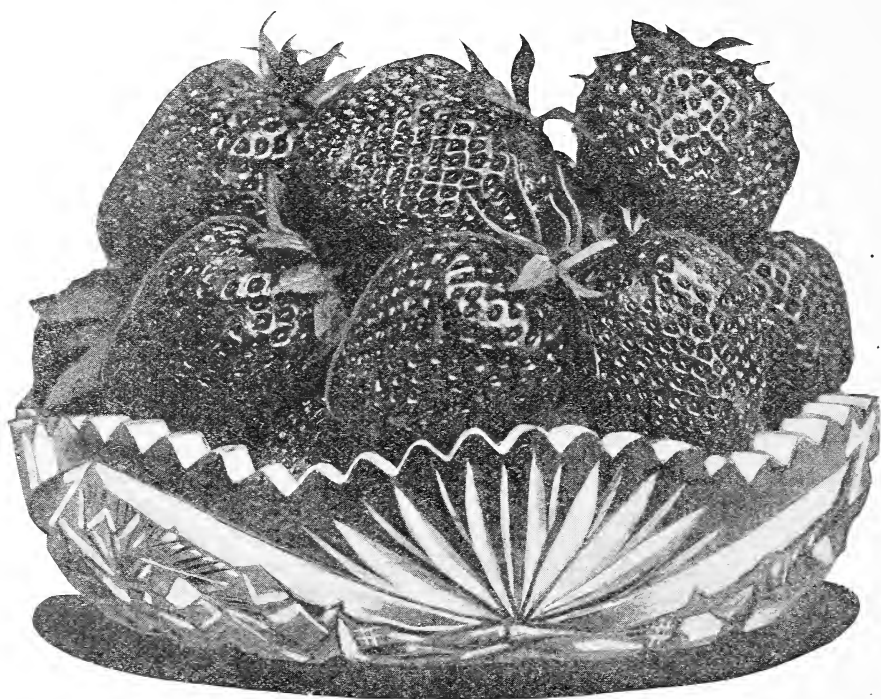
This wonderful strawberry represents a rare combination of qualities. The plants are unusually healthy, thrifty, large, strong and robust. The variety is remarkably resistant to rust and leaf spot, and the roots strike deeply into the soil, thus insuring plenty of moisture and fertility for good growth and productivity. The variety produces runners freely and succeeds under both the single hill and matted row systems.

The fruit is of large size, rich glossy color, slightly elongated and sometimes wedge-

shaped, with bright golden seeds that give the berries a wonderful appearance. The quality for both home use and market is unsurpassed. The fruit starts to ripen at about the same time as that of the Dunlap and Klondike, but its season is longer than that of either. The berries are produced on heavy, thick stems, and are quite uniform in shape and size. The flowers bear pollen profusely, thus insuring good pollination. The plants are staminate and can be grown alone with entire success.

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*Turn over a quarter or half acre to your boy or girl for strawberries and buy them plants for the same. Many boys and girls have made enough money from strawberries to put them through college. Incidentally some of their fathers have found a profitable new line of business.*



## Big Joe (S) Late

The Big Joe is a wonderful strawberry. The strong points in its favor are its large, handsome, highly flavored berries, its adaptability for both home use and market, and its great productivity. The rich, red color extends all the way through the berries. This variety is adapted for any kind of culture because of

its remarkable productivity. The plants reach large size and develop large root systems. The foliage is dark green in color and stands up well. The variety is particularly well adapted for about the same territory as the Aroma. If you want big plants with strong roots, and large, highly flavored berries, plant Big Joe.

## Haverland (P) Medium

The Haverland is a mid-season variety, and, notwithstanding the many other varieties which ripen their fruit at that time, it is always able to give a good account of itself in comparison with others. The fruit is somewhat light in color, and is especially adapted for home use and local markets. It has a long ripening season. The plants are healthy, vigorous and large in size. They are extremely hardy and are good runner producers. The flowers of this variety seem to be quite resistant to frost. Since the flowers are imperfect, a staminate variety must be planted with the Haverland. The Dunlap is recommended for this purpose.

## Warfield (P) Medium

The Warfield has had a popularity that comes to few varieties. The beautiful, cone-shaped berries have a fadeless dark red interior that makes a strong appeal wherever seen. They are juicy and firm. They ship well, and they are unusually well adapted for canning. The plants are hardy, healthy and productive. The variety does best on rich soil and under good care. Since the Warfield is a pistillate variety, a staminate variety must be planted with it to insure cross-pollination. The Dunlap is one of the best for inter-planting with this variety.

**Our testing beds are insurance for our customers.**

# Fall Bearing Strawberries

The fall bearing varieties of strawberries have been attracting a great deal of attention and they are certain to increase in popularity. Think what it means for the wife and kiddies to be able to pick fine luscious strawberries in the fall of the year when none of your neighbors have them. That is what they will be able to do if you plant one of the good fall bearing varieties now available and give the plants proper care. Fall bearers also have great market possibilities. The wonderful eating quality of the berries, and the fact that they ripen when the fruit of ordinary varieties is not available, make them a promising proposition for commercial growers, especially those who have a good local market or a roadside market.

Fall bearing varieties are best adapted to the northern states. We recommend rich, well-drained, naturally moist soil for them. The hill system will usually give best results. Keep all runners and blossoms off the plants during the first part of the summer if you want to get best results in the fall. Quick acting fertilizers are helpful. For the best results, water the plants during dry periods.

## Mastodon

The Mastodon, which was just recently introduced, is a fall bearing variety of great promise. Wonderful things are claimed for this new variety. It may be the fall bearing variety that the horticultural world has been waiting for. If you are interested in the fall bearing varieties, we recommend that you try out this variety, in addition to growing also the Progressive or the Champion, for it may prove particularly well adapted to your conditions and you will then have a lead on your competitors. This variety should give excellent results throughout the northern half of the country, especially where water can be applied during dry weather and where special attention can be given to the plants.

We offer Mastodon plants as follows:

12 plants postpaid.....	\$ .75
25 plants postpaid.....	1.25
50 plants postpaid.....	2.00
100 plants postpaid.....	3.00
500 plants by express collect	12.00
1000 plants by express collect	20.00

## Progressive (S)

The Progressive has been for many years the best known of the fall bearing varieties. The plants are hardy, healthy, vigorous and productive. The variety produces runners quite freely. The fruit is of rich red color, handsome, firm and of very high quality. The variety will produce a good crop both in the spring and in the fall, though many people pick off the blossoms in the spring to encourage larger production in the fall. We know you will like the Progressive, and we recommend this variety for all of the northern states.

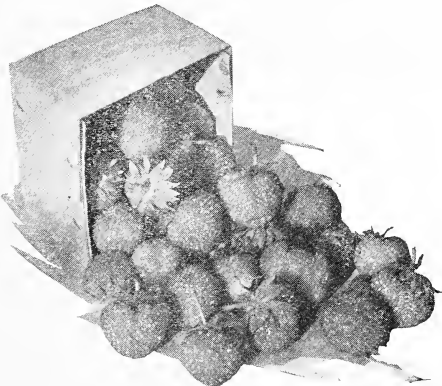
## Champion (S)

The Champion was introduced rather recently and is offering real promise. It is not a heavy plant producer, thus the work of keeping the plants trained to the single hill system is not great. The plants are vigorous growers, healthy and productive. The fruit is of medium size and is inclined to be blunt or wedge-shaped. The flesh is glossy red in color, juicy, firm and of very good flavor. The Champion is adapted for culture over a wide variety of territory.

## Excellent--Alive--Growing

"I received the ten thousand strawberry plants, Aroma and Missionary, and I am pleased to inform you that they arrived very well. They are excellent and are alive and growing. Every year I used to buy from others and was satisfied when I lost fifteen per cent. With yours I lost nothing and am very content. I shall be a good recommender of your plants. Possibly before three days I shall ask for more plants. I shall not again buy of other people."

*Fernando Lopez Muro,*  
Cuba.



# How To Grow Strawberries



WE WANT everybody who buys plants of us to make a success of growing strawberries, no matter whether you are growing only a few plants for home use or hundreds of acres for profit.

There are two reasons why we are so much interested in your welfare. First, we want no one to suffer loss or disappointment as a result of their dealings with us. In the second place, we know that if you get good results from the plants you buy from us, you will become one of our regular customers, if you are not already one, as thousands of growers have done in the past. We know also that you will tell your neighbors and friends of your good results, and in this way we shall make many new friends and new customers. It pays us in the long run to take a keen interest in the welfare of our customers, the same as it does anyone who is in the nursery or plant business to stay.

Because of our interest in your success, we are giving in the following pages directions for growing strawberries. These directions are based on our own 37 years of experience in the strawberry industry, during which time we have studied the business exhaustively from every angle. We have also incorporated in these directions the best known information about strawberries put out by the leading authorities in our colleges, experiment stations and the United States Department of Agriculture. We feel, therefore, that this information is thoroughly reliable and will help anyone to grow strawberries successfully.

## LOCATION AND SOIL

The strawberry grows successfully in a greater range of climate than any other fruit. It thrives in every state in the country and in considerable portions of Canada and Alaska, although variations must be made in its cultural treatment to make it grow best in these widely separated places. The strawberry also does well in a great variety of soils and exposures. No one, therefore, need hesitate to try to grow this wonderful fruit, for by purchasing good plants to start with, and by giving them good care, the crop will succeed practically everywhere.

W. H. Reagan, Florida.—Always find your plants first class, and take pleasure to recommend them.

### Well-Drained Sandy Loam Best

While the strawberry thrives under a wide variety of conditions, it does better in some soils and locations than in others. The very best soil is a rich well-drained sandy loam. The nature of the subsoil is as important as that of the surface soil. It should be porous enough to provide good drainage, and it should yet have body enough to permit it to withstand drought. Gravelly soils, and soils that are wet and heavy, should be avoided if possible. Wet soils can often be made fit for strawberries by tile drainage. Heavy soils in city lots and other small areas can sometimes be improved by mixing them with sifted coal ashes or sand.



Matted Row of Thomas' Pure Bred Plants in Illinois



## Give Preference to High Ground

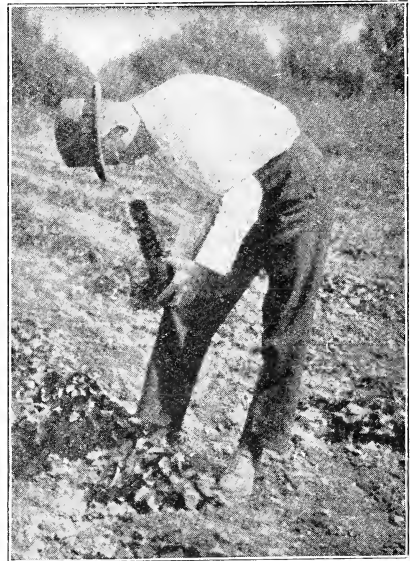
If a choice can be made, the plants of early varieties especially, should be set on fairly high land. The cold air settles to low places, and thus spring frosts on the average do far less damage on high locations than in valleys or low pockets. There is more justification for planting late varieties in low places, for such varieties usually bloom late enough to escape most spring frosts, and furthermore the greater amounts of moisture and fertility present in low areas are an advantage to them. A southern or eastern slope tends to make the plants bloom too early. Level land or a slight north slope gives better results, as a rule.

## Preparation of the Land

In the past, many persons have selected the land for strawberries without giving any attention whatever to its previous treatment. The land was then prepared as for general farm crops, and the plants were hurriedly planted. The results were just about what one would expect under the circumstances. Then the owners wondered why their strawberries did not do better. Fortunately for the industry, this type of grower is rapidly passing out.

If you want to get the best results, select your strawberry land very carefully and give it good preparation in advance. The crop often gives surprising results without special preparation, but it never fails to repay big returns for the extra attention. Remember that you are growing one of the highest class crops in existence, one that responds quickly to the conditions surrounding it, and one that will repay you big, in the quality and quantity of the berries produced, for all extra attention bestowed upon it.

B. C. C. Onterbridge, Bermuda.—The writer considers your plants the best he has ever imported.



George M. Darrow, Strawberry Expert of the U. S. D. A., Taking Pictures on Our Place

## Avoid Sod Land

For best results, the preparation of the land should begin at about a year in advance of planting. Avoid sod land, as grubs are likely to give trouble on such locations. Sod land, if plowed and cultivated for a season, will usually give good results. Timber land often produces excellent strawberry crops. The soil in the average home garden is usually quite fertile and is well adapted for strawberry culture. A good coating of manure worked into any soil will nearly always pay good returns.

G. B. Howes, Florida.—Strawberry plants arrived and are doing nicely; lost not more than 25 plants. Asparagus doing fine.



Trained Helpers Give Detailed Attention to Our Plants



Thomas' Pure Bred Plants in  
Southern California

## Prepare Plant Bed Carefully

For commercial plantations it is best to plow the land in the fall. Some growers do not replot it in the spring but simply pulverize the surface with a disc and harrow. While good results often follow such treatment, we prefer to plow the soil again in the spring unless the soil is naturally very loose. It is a good policy to disc or cultivate the ground thoroughly before plowing. Plow the ground fairly deep and follow with the disc, harrow and roller. Such treatment will pulverize the soil to the full depth of plowing, compact it and leave the surface smooth enough to insure a good job of setting the plants. Many growers make the mistake of setting the plants in soil that is too loose. If the land is dry and lumpy after plowing, it may be a good thing to delay planting until a shower settles the soil and forms a compact surface.

For most home gardens, the plow, disc and harrow cannot be used in soil preparation. However, the same principles of soil preparation can be followed with the help of the spade, wheel hoe, hand hoe and rake.

## Mineral Elements Important

Mineral elements, such as phosphorus and potash, are deficient in supply in many soils, and since an abundance of these is necessary for producing berries of the highest quality, you will find it well, in most places, to supply these elements in addition to growing legumes and applying manure. In soils that contain an abundance of organic matter and nitrogen and a deficiency of mineral elements, the plants suffer from drought and the fruit is soft and does not carry well.

Gerald W. Wright, Trinidad, B. W. I., December.—The small lot arrived O. K. Some of the Missionary plants are flowering already.

## Grow Legumes or Apply Manure

For commercial plantations, it is a good thing to grow a legume crop, such as cow-peas, soy beans, velvet beans, crotalaria, vetch, sweet clover or alfalfa, and plow the growth under the previous fall or summer. If such crops are not grown, and if one has reason to believe the soil is deficient in organic matter and nitrogen, it is a good thing to apply a good dressing of manure. Rotted manure is better than the fresh. The object of advance soil treatment should be to get the soil loose and well pulverized to a considerable depth, to get it rich in nitrogen and organic matter which are well mixed with the soil, and to destroy weeds, insects and diseases as thoroughly as possible.

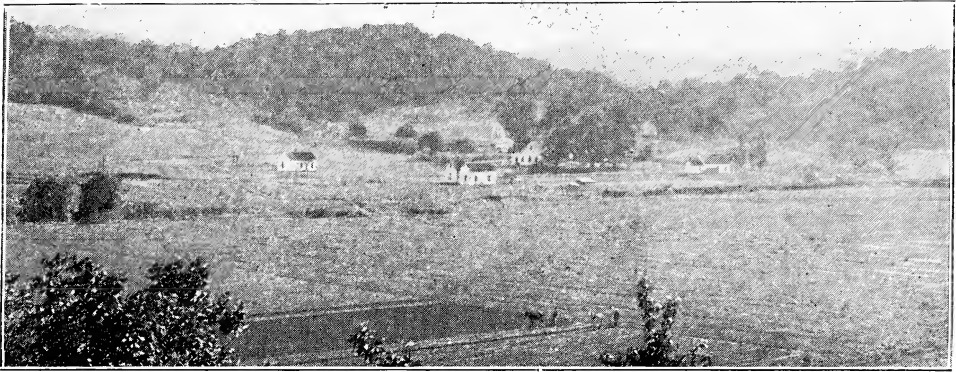
## Study Your Soil

Each soil is a problem in itself and the grower must take into account the nature of his soil and the soil treatment of past years to determine the fertility program to be followed. If legume crops or manure have not been used rather liberally, the nitrogen and organic matter supply will likely be deficient. Nitrate of soda and sulphate of ammonia are good commercial forms of nitrogen. Phosphorus is present in limited quantities in many soils, and applications of this element usually pay big returns in strawberry growing. Acid phosphate and steamed bone meal are the best forms of this element for strawberries. Potash is almost certain to be present in limited amount in peat and sandy soils. It is commonly abundant in other soils, though in somewhat insoluble condition unless there is a good supply of rotting organic matter present. Sulphate of potash and muriate of potash are the best forms to use for strawberries.



Thomas' Pure Bred Plants Under  
Irrigation in Idaho





General View of Our Plant Farms

## Applying Fertilizers

In applying commercial fertilizers, it is best to scatter them broadcast or drill them into the soil after plowing or spading. If applied before plowing or spading, they are almost certain to be covered too deeply for best results. When applied to the plowed surface,

the fertilizers can be thoroughly mixed with the soil by means of the rake or harrow, and they will then be within easy reach of the plant roots.

Limestone is believed by many persons to injure strawberries, and it is considered inadvisable to apply it to strawberry land.

## PLANTING

Some persons claim that strawberries can be planted any time of the year. This may be true, but for the average practical grower, we recommend planting in the fall, winter or spring, depending on the section of the country in which he may live.

In Florida and other Gulf Coast states, the plants are permitted to produce only one crop. They are then plowed up. New planting stock is procurable from the north every year. In January and February, the imported plants are set in multiplying beds. Runner plants produced by these beds are used to set fruiting beds from June to November. These beds bear their crop of fruit in January, February and March following.

In states a little further north, including the Carolinas, Tennessee, Arkansas, etc., the plants can be set in the fall, or during mild periods in the winter, or in the early spring. Fall and winter set plants should be mulched to prevent injury from alternative thawing and freezing of the soil.

In more northern states and in Canada, it is best to set strawberry plants in the early spring.

## Select Your Plants Carefully

Without question the most important factor in strawberry growing is the plants themselves. Many people think that after they have secured a start, it is unnecessary to purchase new stock again, but that new patches can be started from plants taken from the old bed. If you are an experienced grower, and if you will follow religiously a long list of precautions, you can do this, but the average grower will find it far better to secure new stock from an absolutely reliable source for starting each new plantation. The plants from the average old patch are certain to be more or less diseased, and furthermore there is always the danger of getting a large number of plants which have developed from seeds of wasted strawberries. Such plants are of very inferior character. The cost of reliable planting stock is so small that no one can afford to take the risk of planting diseased or seedling plants taken from old patches.

## Sex in Strawberries

Strawberry varieties differ from each other in the nature of the flowers which they produce. Some varieties develop flowers which have both stamens (male organs) and pistils (female organs). Such varieties are called staminate or perfect flowering sorts. Among the staminate varieties are the Dunlap, Klondike, Excelsior, Ozark, Gandy and Aroma.



A Bunch of Thomas' Pure Bred Plants



# Pleasure and Profit from Pure Bred Strawberry Plants

## Our Special Offer to Home Gardeners

We want to see strawberries in every home garden. Strawberry varieties are a puzzle to many beginners, and in order to help such growers to get a start of this wonderful fruit, we are making the special offers listed below. Do not mistake us in regard to these offers. This is not a scheme for getting rid of odd varieties. Remember that our future success depends on the results you get from our plants. This plan is devised to assist our thousands of new customers who are sincerely anxious to grow strawberries successfully. The selection of varieties is an extremely important matter; in fact, the reason we are making these offers is because we see so many beginners make a poor selection and thus place a handicap on themselves from the very beginning. If you will leave the selection of varieties to us, you can depend on it that we will select varieties well suited to your conditions. We are studying varieties all the time, and we positively know we can make as good a selection as can be made. You can order plants with the greatest confidence under this plan. We recommend about 300 plants for the average family.

These prices include delivery charges to your door.

100 plants of variety suited to your vicinity.....	\$1.00
300 plants of variety suited to your vicinity.....	2.25
500 plants of variety suited to your vicinity.....	3.00
1000 plants of variety suited to your vicinity.....	5.75

If an ever-bearing variety is wanted with these home garden collections add to the above prices as follows:

For 25 plants .....	\$0.75
For 50 plants .....	1.25
For 100 plants .....	2.00
For 300 plants .....	3.50

*These offers apply to varieties of our own selection only. Those who wish to specify their varieties should order from our price list.*

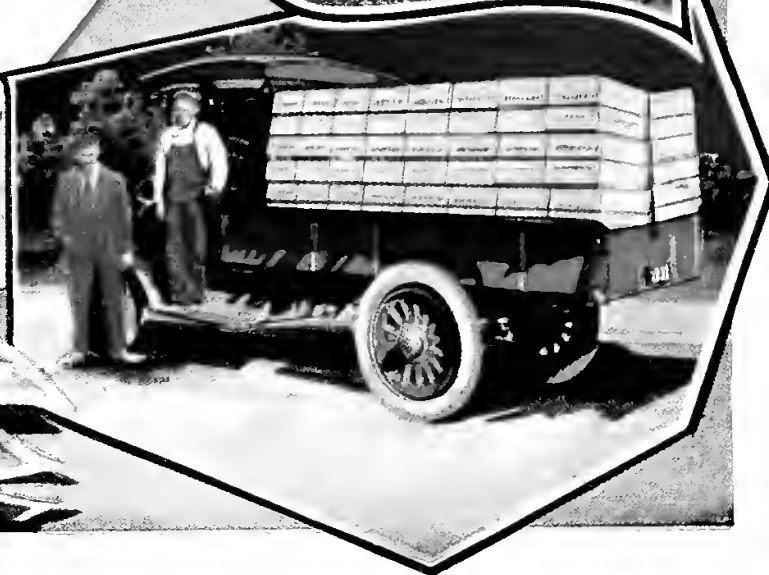
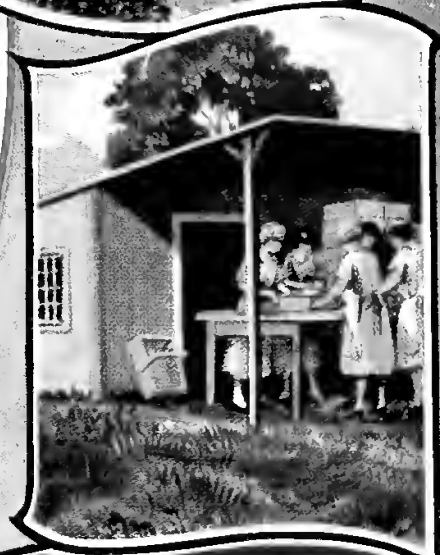
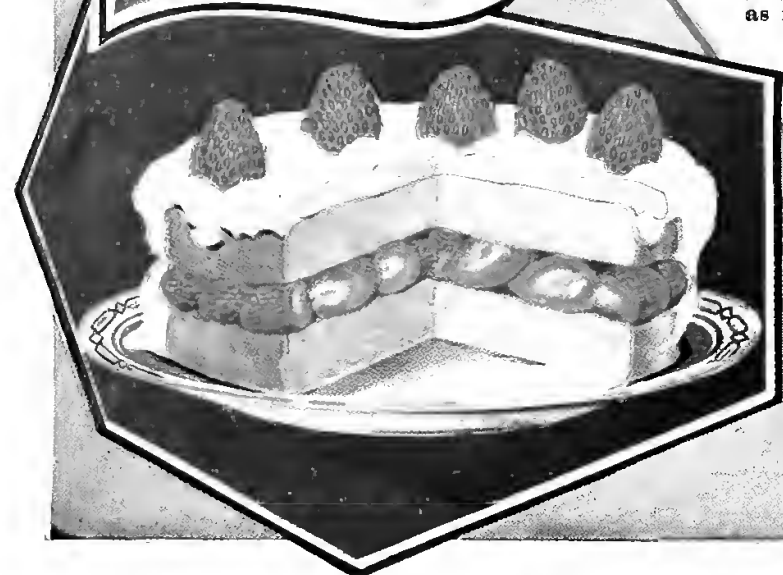
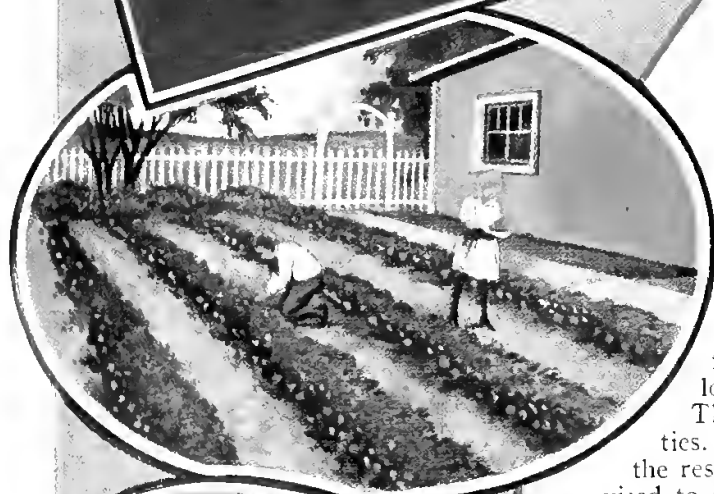
## Special Offer to Commercial Growers

There are big profits to be realized in growing strawberries. More people are taking up this business each year to help satisfy the demand for this luscious fruit.

There are thousands of commercial growers, boy and girl club members, and general farmers who want to begin to grow strawberries in a small commercial way, but who do not know strawberry varieties. To assist such growers, we are making the special offers described below. This plan relieves you of the worry and responsibility of selection of varieties, and it insures you against making a mistake and starting with the wrong variety for your conditions. Under this plan you will get the benefit of our long experience and study and of our knowledge of variety adaptations. The varieties being ordered by our hundreds of customers in your locality will also serve as a guide to us in selecting your varieties wisely. If you order under this plan, you can rest assured that your varieties will be chosen by us with the utmost care and with your own interests solely in mind. Plants ordered under this plan are certain to give you satisfaction. We have made the prices for these offers just as low as is possible, consistent with the high quality of the plants. Our offers, quality and price considered, cannot be equaled.

These prices include delivery charges to your station.

2,500 plants of variety suited to your vicinity .....	\$12.50
5,000 plants of variety suited to your vicinity .....	\$24.00



Varieties of this kind can be planted solidly in a bed. They are capable of fertilizing themselves and do not require other varieties to be inter-planted with them. Some of the perfect varieties, however, do better when other varieties are inter-planted with them. They seem to give better results when the flowers are fertilized with the pollen of other varieties. The Aroma and Gandy are of this kind. In our catalog and price list, the staminate or perfect varieties are indicated by (S).

Other varieties bear flowers containing only pistils or female organs. Such flowers bear no pollen and are unable to fertilize themselves. Other varieties which bear pollen (staminate varieties) must be inter-planted with them to bring about fertilization of the flowers. The Warfield and Crescent are examples of pistillate varieties. Such varieties are indicated by (P) in our catalog and price lists.

smaller leaves should be removed, and about one-third of the root system should be cut off. We do not trim any of the plants before shipping them, since we believe that you will secure far better results by trimming them freshly just before planting. The roots can quickly be trimmed by arranging the plants in small bunches.

The best results are obtained from large, strong plants. Our plants are grown under the very best conditions, and we assort them very carefully before they leave our hands. You will therefore need to discard none of the plants obtained from us. They will all be satisfactory for planting. This will result in a distinct saving to you as compared with the plants obtained from some sources.

## Protect Plant Roots

By all means, give the plant roots good care while they are out of the ground. Ex-



Flower of a Staminate Variety

Flower of a Pistillate Variety

## Care of the Plants

In ordering plants, be sure to have them shipped early enough so that they will be on hand at the best time for planting in your section. The plants should be set while still dormant, for after growth starts, they do not live so well. If the plants cannot be set at once on arrival, they should be "heeled in." This is accomplished by opening the bundles and spreading the plants thinly in a "V"-shaped trench five or six inches deep, and covering the roots to the crowns with fine moist soil, which is then thoroughly compacted.

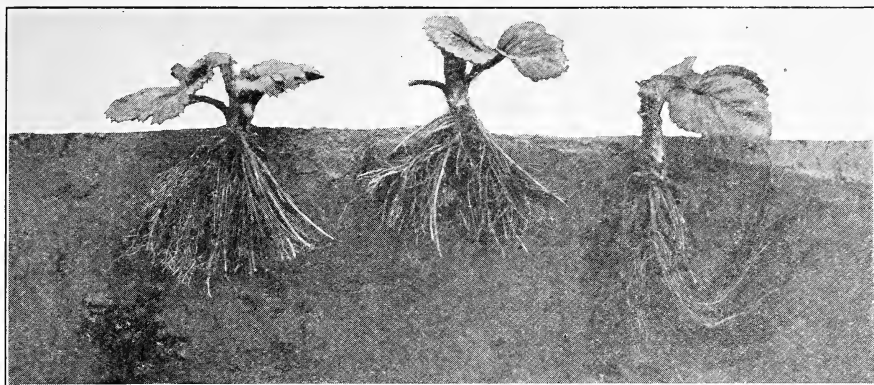
## Trimming the Plants

Just before setting, the plants should be carefully trimmed. All but a few of the

posure to air or sun for even a short time will greatly weaken them. Keep the plants in a bucket or basket while planting, moisten the roots occasionally, and keep the basket or bucket covered with a piece of moist burlap. Remove the plants from the bucket or basket in small bunches while you are planting them.

## Marking the Land

Before setting the plants, it will be necessary to mark off the land. For city gardens and small patches in general, a line can be stretched, and the plants can be set alongside of this. For large commercial plantations, a marker will save a lot of time and result in a better job. Many growers mark the land both ways so that the ground can be cultivated crosswise until the runners start to grow.



Strawberry plants set at various depths. Left-hand picture: Correct method, roots properly pruned and spread, and bud at proper depth with soil firmed well about the roots. Middle picture: Roots properly pruned and spread but plant set too shallow. Third picture: Plants set too deep. Roots not pruned or spread. Turned back roots prevent plants from getting a quick start.

## Depth of Planting

There is one very important point in setting strawberry plants, and that is that they should be set at the same depth they grew in the plant bed. If set too deeply, the crowns will be smothered, and if set too shallow the roots will dry out and death of the plant will follow. It will pay you well to give very careful attention to this point. The stand of plants obtained will depend to a large extent on the depth of planting.

## Details of Setting

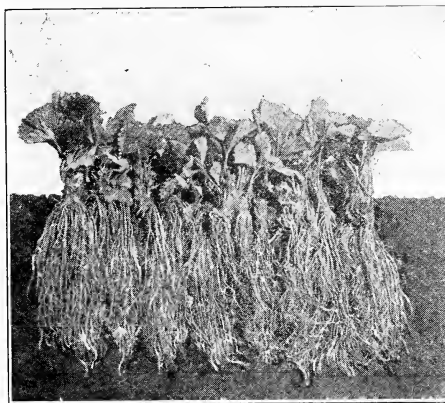
A variety of tools can be used for setting strawberry plants. In large commercial plantations, horse-drawn planters are sometimes used. For ordinary work, a flat dibble, trowel or a spade can be used. Having planted millions of plants in our long experience, we greatly prefer the spade. In using it, a man and a boy work together. The man handles the spade in his right hand and carries a basket of plants on his left arm. The boy carries a small bunch of plants in his left hand, and his right is used to set the plants. With his right foot, the man forces the spade into the ground at right angles to the row and with the left edge of the spade about on a line with the mark. The spade handle is

then forced forward, leaving an opening behind. Holding one of the plants in his right hand between the thumb and second finger, and with the first finger extending straight down beside the roots, the boy quickly inserts the plant in the opening made by the spade, with the roots well spread out and with the crown resting just at the surface of the soil. The man then withdraws the spade and at the same time presses the soil firmly to the plant with his foot. A man and a boy that work together can soon learn to do the work very efficiently and rapidly. See illustrations on page 20.



Properly Pruned Plant

In home gardens and in market gardens which are equipped for irrigation, it is a good thing to water the plants immediately after setting. This will insure a better stand and help greatly to promote immediate growth of the plants.



A Bunch of Plants Properly Arranged for Heeling in

## Always Pleased

Mrs. Erin Amos, Georgia. — Have ordered plants several times from you; have always been pleased with your selection.





Making Hole for a Plant by the Spade Method

## PLANTING DISTANCES & PLANTING SYSTEMS

Planting distances for strawberries will depend largely on the system of planting used. There are two systems in common use. One is called the matted row system and the other the single hill system.

### Matted Row System

The matted row system is used by most commercial growers, and it is the best one for most home growers to follow. The largest crops of berries are produced by this method. It is especially adapted for varieties which tend to form runner plants generously. In this system, the plants are usually set in rows three and one-half to four feet apart and from one to two feet apart in the rows, depending on the soil, variety and locality. As the runner plants develop, they are allowed to take root at random in the rows. With vigorous varieties, it is well to space the plants when hoeing them, but with the less vigorous varieties this is unnecessary. Some growers allow the matted rows to become 18 to 24 inches wide; others prefer narrower rows. The narrower rows will usually produce larger berries, though not so many of them.

### Single Hill System

The single hill system is used by some growers in all sections, and it is used almost exclusively in some parts of the country. The largest individual berries are produced by this method, though not the most of them. The method is especially adapted for varieties which do not form runners freely.

In this system, the plants are set in rows 30 to 40 inches apart as a rule and from 12 to 24 inches apart in the rows. All runners are trimmed off as fast as they develop, thus the growth is all concentrated in the original plant, which, with good treatment, becomes large and develops a robust crown.

### Modified Systems

A modification of the single hill system is used in Florida and other Gulf Coast states and in Southern California. The plants are set in double or triple rows 12 to 24 inches apart, and about 12 inches is allowed between plants in the rows. The plants in adjoining rows are alternated so that they may make better use of the space. About two feet is allowed between each group of rows. Wheel hoes are used to cultivate between the narrow rows, and horse drawn or motor driven cultivators are used for the wider spaces. All runners are kept off the plants. In sections where the drainage is likely to be deficient, as in Florida, the plants are often set on wide, flat-topped ridges.

Modifications of the above methods are used in different sections and by different growers.

### Quality Pays

J. A. Ellis, Alabama.—Note prices are little higher this year; can buy cheaper elsewhere but know you have good plants and will give you my order.



Setting a Plant by the Spade Method



Marking the Land. See Page 18

## Removing the Blossoms

Strawberry plants, when well grown, will develop flower clusters soon after starting into growth. In the extreme South, such clusters are not removed, since it is the object to obtain a crop of berries a few weeks after the plants are set. In other sections, however, such flower clusters should be pinched or cut out as soon as they appear. If allowed to develop, they will sap the energy of the plant and reduce the crop the following year. It should be the object during the first season to get as vigorous development of the plant as possible. See page 22.

## Healthiest and Best

Jerome Kimball, Texas.—Last fall I ordered 2,500 Klondike berry plants from you. These plants were received in good condition, and were by far the healthiest and best I have ever seen. This year I want 3,500 plants.

## From Porto Rico

D. W. May, Director U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Porto Rico Agricultural Experimental Station.—The enclosed check of \$2.00 is in payment for your receipted voucher covering strawberry plants. These reached us in good condition.

## Growing Fine

Roy Morse, Florida.—The strawberries arrived the 30th and in good condition, which I planted at once and they are growing off fine. I also thank you for the extra plants. I am well pleased with them.

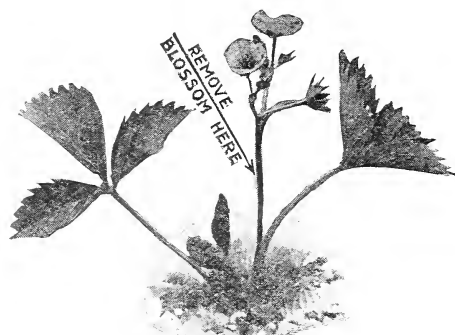
## Cultivation and Care

Cultivation of strawberries should start immediately after the plants are set, and it should be continued frequently throughout the season. Shallow, level cultivation is best. Avoid deep cultivation always. Aim only to keep the weeds destroyed. A wheel hoe is a fine implement for home gardens. Small tooth cultivators are best for commercial plantations. Cultivate after every rain as soon as the soil becomes mellow and at intervals of a week to ten days between rains. The fruit buds which will bear the following crop of berries are formed within the crowns of the plant during the late summer and fall. The better developed these are, the larger and more numerous will be the berries produced. Therefore, give your plants the very best care during the growing season. Encourage the earliest runner plants to become established, as these will develop better fruit buds than the later formed plants. Apply water in a dry season if it is available. Cultivate frequently so as to keep all weeds destroyed and thus conserve the



Matted Rows

moisture and fertility for your strawberries. Many of the best authorities are now recommending an application of well-rotted manure or nitrate of soda between the rows in August



Where to Remove Blossom, Page 21

or September in order to stimulate development of large, strong fruit buds.

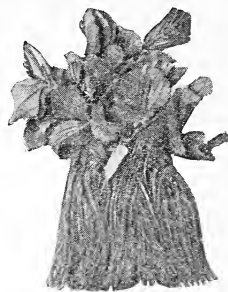
Some hoeing will be necessary for best results in addition to cultivation. Weeds should be kept from growing between the plants, and excess plants in the matted rows should be trimmed out. As a rule, from four to six inches should be allowed between plants. When the new plants are beginning to form on the runners, it is a good thing to press them down into the soil and draw a little moist earth over the runner just behind them. This will prevent the wind from blowing them about and enable them to become quickly established.

### Doing Well

Mary T. Wolfe.—My strawberry plants shipped November 2 arrived in good shape and are doing well.

## Mulching Plants

Mulching is practiced in the northern states to protect the plants from freezing weather in the winter, from alternating freezing and thawing in the late winter and spring, and from sand and dirt during the picking season. In the South, mulching is employed to protect the fruit from sand and dirt. In the intervening territory, mulching is not always resorted to, though light mulching is often employed with profit.



Pruned Bunch

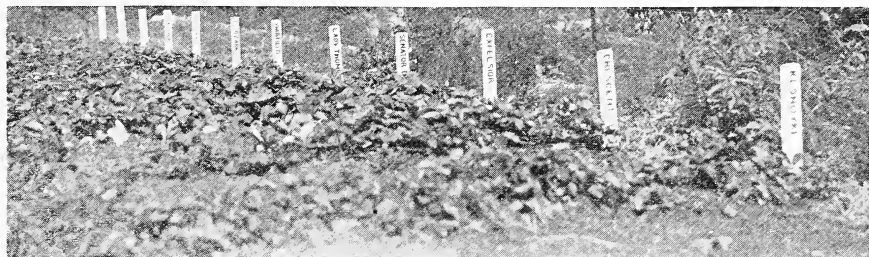
Straw, corn stalks, pine needles, marsh hay, or any other material that will afford protection without smothering the plants may be used. Wheat straw is perhaps the best material where available. In northern localities, the mulch should be applied just after the ground freezes sufficiently to hold up a wagon and horse. There should be no snow or ice on the surface when it is applied. Apply the mulch evenly, and bank the material somewhat higher over the rows than between them. In the South, where pine needles are commonly employed, the mulch is applied around and between the plants just about the time they begin to bloom, the object being simply to protect the berries from dirt and sand.

In northern sections where a heavy mulch is often applied, many growers remove part of the mulch from over the rows in the early spring and place it between the rows. The plants can then start into growth quickly, and the straw between the rows keeps down the weeds and provides good conditions for picking.



Our Plants Growing in Double Rows in Florida





A View of Part of Our Testing Bed

## Renewal of Strawberry Beds

In the extreme South, strawberry patches are plowed up after fruiting once. In northern localities, the plants are nearly always allowed to produce two crops and sometimes more. The best growers take only two crops from a patch. They consider it far better to start a new bed than to retain an old one for more than two fruiting seasons.

## Renew Right After Picking

Renewal should start immediately after the last picking of berries is made. The patches, as a rule, will be rather weedy by that time, and the ground may be more or less compacted from walking over it during wet weather.

First, cut over the entire bed with a mower or scythe. The growth may be removed with a rake or fork, but many of the best growers allow it to become dry, and then let fire run over the patch on a windy day. This method destroys trash, insects and diseases, and usually the plants are quite healthy when they begin to grow. It is best to do the burning when the soil is somewhat moist from a recent rain, in order to minimize damage to the plant crowns.

Asparagus is a good crop to grow. See our prices on first-class plants on page 26.

## Narrowing the Rows

The next step consists in narrowing down the rows, if the matted row system is used, to about six inches. This can be done with a cultivator or by barring off the soil from



Straw Mulch Between Rows

both sides of the rows with a small plow, running it shallow and using a rolling coultter. The soil should be worked back to the rows after two or three days with a cultivator. Some growers run a harrow over the patch both ways to loosen the surface and kill weeds. This treatment tears the plant somewhat, but they soon recover from it. After the rows are narrowed, it is well to thin the plants in the row to five or six inches apart.



Thomas' Pure Bred Plants Under Single Hill Culture

Mrs. Wm. Broyles, Texas.—Please send me 200 Klondike Strawberry plants. Your previous shipment arrived in good shape. Since putting them out I want to increase the size of the patch and just need 200 for that purpose.



W. W. Thomas in a Well-Cultivated Patch of Young Plants

In small, home plantations the rows can be narrowed with a hoe or spade, and the hoe can be used to thin the plants in the row.

When the single hill system is used, no narrowing or thinning of the rows is necessary, but it is a good thing to loosen the soil around the plants with a cultivator or fork. Some growers convert the single hill system to a double hill system the second year.

### Apply Fertilizer to Promote Active Growth

It is good practice to apply a dressing of well-rotted manure or complete fertilizer between the rows at the time of renewing a bed. This will help to stimulate active growth immediately, which is highly desirable.

After renewal, cultivation should be practiced frequently during the remainder of the season.

### Very Much Pleased

Mrs. C. N. Brooks.—I was very much pleased with the few plants I ordered from you last year. Please send me 1,000 Missionary.

### Wonderful Results

Mrs. Geo. Cupples, Florida.—Please forward same at once, we having had such wonderful results from your plants last year.

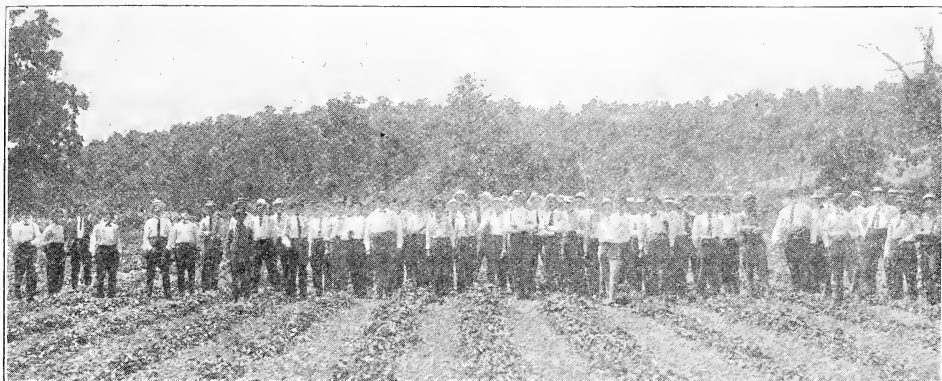
### Harvesting the Crop

Preparations for harvesting strawberries should be made before the picking season opens. For commercial patches, packing sheds should be conveniently located and well equipped, and plenty of carriers, crates and boxes should be on hand. Tickets for pickers should be printed. Wagons and trucks should be placed in first-class condition. In most places, plenty of women, boys and girls can be obtained for picking. Small children should not be allowed in the patch. If it is necessary to import help, preparations must be made for feeding and housing them. The picking and packing crews should be well organized. Usually, one field foreman can handle 20 to 25 pickers nicely, and one foreman is sufficient for a packing shed, as a rule.

### Picking the Berries

Berries should be picked with one-fourth to one-eighth inch of the stems attached. For home use or local market, the berries should become quite ripe on the vines, as the best quality is then secured. For distant markets, the berries must be picked in a greener condition. Uniformity in degree of ripeness should





The Illinois State Horticultural Society Visiting Our Strawberry Plant Farm

be sought for in any case. All over-ripe or cull berries should be picked and thrown away as the berries are picked. Sometimes the berry boxes are faced by the pickers in the field, but the best results are usually obtained when experienced facers in a central packing shed do this work.

## Marketing

Everybody likes strawberries, and there is rarely any trouble in selling them. Home growers who have an excess can easily sell them to their neighbors or to the local grocer. Farmers and gardeners have a wonderful outlet for the good berries in roadside markets, a proposition that is offering tremendous opportunities as a result of the hard roads now being constructed. Then there are the local produce dealers and grocers in nearby towns and cities, who are in position to handle large quantities.

In large growing centers, it is necessary to ship most of the berries to distant markets. Best results can be secured in such cases

through a growers' co-operative association. Associations which have entire control of the sale give the best results. Such organizations can standardize the varieties grown, establish uniform grades and packs in a large way, develop brands and labels and advertise the produce, distribute the berries so that market gluts can be avoided and the berries placed where they will bring the best prices, apply efficient sales methods, and collect claims for losses and damages. There are many associations of this kind in existence, and when well organized and well operated, they are strong factors in building up the industry in the community. Not only can such associations assist growers materially in developing a better market for their product, but they can assist greatly in purchasing supplies of all kinds and plants for their members. We like to deal with such associations, as they are helping to build up the strawberry industry, and we are always ready to offer large lots of the very best plants to such associations at special prices.



Delivering a Load of Thomas' Pure Bred Plants to the Express Company

# Order Your Plants from Thomas and Get Results

WE WISH that space would permit us to tell you more about our facilities for growing strawberry plants. Better still, we wish you could visit our plantation. You would then be convinced beyond all doubt that our climate and soil, as well as our equipment and other facilities, are admirably adapted for producing the best plants that can be grown.

We want to emphasize again that our

Furthermore, we have a longer season than nurseries located further North, and this, of course, allows our plants to continue to grow and add vitality until late in the fall for next year's operations.

Our wonderful location also has some distinct advantages over locations further South. Take the nematode for instance. This tiny pest infests the roots of strawberries and many other plants and is a serious problem



50,000 Strawberry Plants Starting on their Way to Cuba by Parcel Post

plants are not only true to variety but are as free as plants can be from serious insects and diseases. These things mean a great deal to you. Because of our location, about midway between the North and South, our plants escape the rigors of the severe Northern climate, and, therefore, never reach our customers in a devitalized condition due to winter injury.

in the South, where the soil does not freeze deep enough in the winter to kill it. In our climate, however, the soil freezes hard enough to kill the nematode, should any happen to gain entrance, and, therefore, this destructive pest is unable to gain a foothold. Southern growers may rest assured that they will never introduce nematoda on our plants. Many planters in that section have introduced nema-



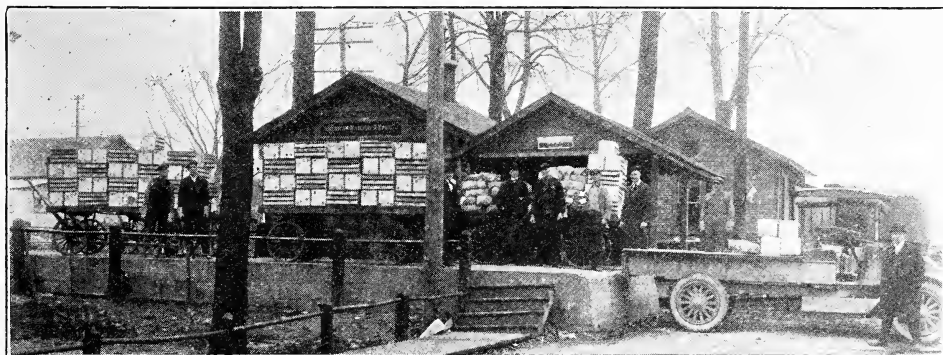
**Big Shipment of Thomas Pure Bred Strawberry Plants Going to all Parts of the World, Jerusalem, Palestine, Italy, Egypt, Bermuda, Cuba, South America, Mexico, Canada, Alaska, New Zealand, China, Japan.**

toda on plants obtained from more southern localities, much to their sorrow and loss. Besides being free from insects and diseases as it is practicable to make them, our plants are not devitalized by the hot, dry weather that often prevails in more southern localities.

So there you are! No matter where you are located, North or South, East or West, you will find our plants the very best for your purposes that you can obtain. Remember that the things you want most in strawberry plants are (1) trueness to variety, (2) vital-

ity, (3) freedom from insects and diseases. We furnish exactly that kind of plants. And we are able to do it because of our ideal location and soil, our knowledge of the business, and our facilities for growing and handling plants. You get the very best plants available when you buy from us, and you need not have the least doubt of it.

We want you to consider just one more fact. Recall for a moment the large numbers of firms which go into the plant growing business and then soon drop out of it. Dun and Bradstreet reports show that about



**Another Big Shipment of Thomas Plants at the Express Office in Anna, Illinois.**

95 per cent of the business institutions started to fail sooner or later. We are sure the average of failures is fully as high in the plant growing business. But notwithstanding such conditions, we have been in business 38 years and our business is growing larger each year. If we said nothing else whatever, this fact alone should be sufficient to convince you of the value of our plants.

Our business depends on our customers. They would not continue to buy from us if our plants did not give them satisfaction. Competition is extremely keen in the plant business, as you are aware, and we could not maintain our business as we have maintained it if our plants had not consistently delivered the goods.

We wish you could inspect our

order books and our letter file. They would tell you a marvelous story of satisfaction. We have great pride in our satisfied customers. They are the biggest asset we have because of the repeat orders they send us.

We also wish you could look over our shipping lists any day in our busy season. You would doubtless find shipments on their way to practically every state in the country, as well as to Canada, Mexico and the West

Indies. You might also find some shipments directed to Italy, Japan, China, Bermuda, South America, Alaska and New Zealand, for we ship plants to all of these places.

The following are a few of the thousands of testimonials of satisfaction we have in our files. They speak for themselves.



One of Our Faithful Iron Horses Preparing Land for Strawberry Plants.

## Our Customers Are Pleased

### Buys By the Thousands

Lakeland, Fla.—I am in love with your plants. I will fix up a patch for 10,000 and want 5,000 to finish my field yet. Send me 5,000 soon as you can and I will let you know when I will want the 10,000. It will be only a few days.—C. M. Helsel.

### Dry Season Didn't Hurt His Plants

Creal Springs, Ill.—Dear Sir and Friend: Am writing you in regard to the Strawberry plants I bought from you last Spring. Can say am more than pleased with them. Everybody tells me I have one of the best Strawberry patches they ever saw. This has been an awful dry season, but it didn't hurt my Strawberries.—W. O. Chism.

### All Are Living—Look Fine

Loxley, Ala.—Wish to acknowledge receipt of plants, came in good condition and got out in good shape, different looking plants and all are living and look fine. If they don't come through it will not be your fault or mine, so can only bestow it on an unkind Providence. With kindest regards, I am—Dr. W. Randall.

### A-1 in Every Respect

Central Hershey, Cuba.—I received today the Strawberry plants. They are A-1 in every respect, for which I thank you.—Louis Miller.

### Repeat Orders

Finca "Marina" Rancho Boyeros, Havana, Cuba.—As my previous order came in very good condition

I hereby send you a new one for 1,000 Aroma plants.—Francisco Camps.

### They Looked Good

Pensacola, Fla.—Enclosed money order for small order of plants; saw my neighbor's plants from your nursery today; they looked so good I thought I would like some too.—Louis Gilsbach, Highland Park, Rt. 3.

### A Fine Patch

Enclosed draft of \$3.00 for 500 plants. I ordered 500 plants three years ago of you and sure had a fine patch.—Mrs. J. A. Watts.

### Arrived In Excellent Shape

Pasadena, Calif.—Plants arrived in excellent shape, 10,000 Lady Corneille.—A. A. Foster.

### Bought on Neighbor's Recommendation

Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.—Your Strawberry plants have been very highly recommended to me by Mr. J. L. Rees of Davie, Fla., and I am accordingly placing my order for 4,000 plants.—G. W. McCathie.

Fort Pierce, Fla.—Having had some experience with your plants in the past, please do not consider this letter as an inquiry as to the quality of your product. They need no further recommendation than one purchase.—James B. Rock.

Apopka, Fla., Box 57.—Enclosed find money order for \$1.95, for which please send me 200 Lady Thompson Strawberry plants. The Missionary I ordered from you are doing fine.—R. S. Taylor.



# Rhubarb

## The Earliest Gift of the Garden

The crisp, tart stalks of rhubarb are the earliest product of the garden. This vegetable is valuable not only for pies and sauces, but it has great dietetic value as well. Physicians in general recognize its properties as a tonic and as a purifier of the blood.

### For Every Garden

No home garden should be without rhubarb. A half dozen hills will supply the needs of the family. As a commercial crop, rhubarb has great merit. The plants are very hardy and grow in a wide variety of climates and soils. The crop is easy to start and easy to grow. The product is always salable at good prices.

### The Best Soil

The best rhubarb is produced in a deep, well-drained, rich soil that retains moisture well. Avoid hard land, gumbo, heavy clay, gravel or porous, sandy soil if possible. However, such soils will often give excellent results if an abundance of manure or plant growth is mixed with them.

### Preparing the Soil

In advance of planting, the soil should be deeply plowed or spaded, and thoroughly pulverized. Commercial fertilizers are often applied after plowing by many growers.

### Setting the Plants

Rhubarb plants can be set in the fall or in the spring. In southern localities, they can be set during mild periods in the winter.

In the home garden, the plants do very well when set three or four feet apart in a row at the side of the garden, preferably where there is no shade. In commercial plantations, the plants should be set four by four feet. The holes should be opened with a spade or plow and should be large enough to receive the plants comfortably. The plants should be set at about the same depth they grew in the nursery and thoroughly compacted afterward.

### Cultivation

Cultivating and hoeing should start as soon as the plants begin to grow and should be continued throughout the season. Level, shallow cultivation is best.

### Harvesting

Many growers begin to pull rhubarb the year after it is set, but unless a very vigorous growth has taken place, it is best to delay harvesting until two years of growth have been made, in order to allow the plants to become strong and robust.

Rhubarb likes rich soil, and it is a good thing to apply a good coating of manure every winter or spring.

### Resetting

After about eight years, the old plants should be dug up, divided, and re-planted. The stalks tend to become small if resetting does not take place occasionally.

### Forcing

Rhubarb may be forced in the winter or early in the spring by taking up strong plants and setting them in moist sand or soil, in a basement or hot bed. The plants may also be forced in the spring by inverting a barrel over the plant on the outside and banking the barrel with manure. Handled in this way, the plants produce large, tender stalks with small leaves.

### Best Quality Stock

Rhubarb comes true to variety only from root divisions. Plants grown from seeds show a wide variation and do not produce a uniform product. Our rhubarb stock is of the well known Linnaeus variety, obtained from established plantations of known productivity.

Portland, Tenn., February 10, 1926.

Two years ago this spring, I ordered from you 14,000 Aroma plants. We planted four acres. They were very fine plants and just did fine. We made some good money, and they all said I had the best patch around here. When I put out my patch, so many of my neighbors said I paid too much for my slips. I told them to wait and see the results, and the results have proved that your slips were away ahead of the cheap plants.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. FANNIE BYRAM.

# Asparagus

If you are a home grower, you should, by all means, grow asparagus. The tender young shoots are very healthy, and this is the first vegetable that is ready for use in the spring. A large crop may be produced on a small patch of ground. The crop is easy to start and easy to grow. In the summer and fall, the rich, green foliage has pronounced ornamental value. A patch lasts many years.

## Strong Commercial Demand

If you are a commercial grower you will find asparagus very profitable. Few vegetables have grown so rapidly in popularity in the last few years. With the population growing rapidly, there will always be a strong demand for all asparagus that can be produced. The crop is easy to start and requires little care after the first couple of years aside from harvesting, which, of course, no one objects to.

Rich, deep, well-drained soil is best for asparagus. The land should be plowed deeply in advance of planting and should have plenty of manure or plant growth mixed with it. The land should be thoroughly prepared with plow, disc and harrow just before planting.



## Set the Plants Fairly Deep

Asparagus plants should be set ten to twelve inches deep. In the home garden, they can be set in a trench dug with a spade. For commercial plantations, the rows should be opened with a 12 to 14-inch plow, throwing the soil out on both sides. The loose dirt should then be removed with a shovel or pulled aside in the furrow with a hoe. The rows should be made four to five feet apart.

The plants should be set about two feet apart in the bottom of the furrow or trench. Spread the roots out in their natural position and cover them with one to two inches of fine moist soil. As the young shoots begin to grow, work the soil gradually to them until the trench is level. Following this, practice level cultivating throughout the season.

## Plant in Fall or Spring

In southern localities, asparagus may be planted in the fall or during mild periods in the winter. It may be planted successfully everywhere in the spring and especially in northern sections.

Some persons recommend two-year-old plants. We can supply these, but we prefer one-year-old plants, as they give better results in the long run.

## Care of the Patch

Some persons remove the asparagus growth from the land in the winter, but we prefer to leave it on the land and work it into the soil with a disc or by plowing shallow the following spring.

After asparagus is started, the patch should be forked or disced lightly early every spring. If weeds become serious during the cutting season, cultivate between the rows occasion-

## Results Beyond Expectations

Mrs. E. Alvarez Cerice, Cuba.—Last year we planted some strawberries that the Agronomical Station advised us to buy from you and the result has been far beyond our expectations. The varieties were Missionary and Lady Corneille. We are so pleased that we recommend your plants to every one interested. Two hundred plants gave us a little basket full every day during three months. We made a rustic pergola and covered the beds with wire netting and palm leaves so that the rain would not spoil the flowers, etc., and watered by sub-irrigation; the result was surprising to all.



ally. After the cutting season is ended, the patch should again be forked or disced, after which cultivation should be practiced as long as possible.

## Cutting the Crop

Some persons cut asparagus the year after the plants are set, but we think it a better practice to delay cutting until the second season in order to give the plants an opportunity to become well established. It is a good thing to stop cutting fairly early while the patch is young. A cutting season of 6 to 8 weeks is normally sufficient. During the cutting season all shoots, both large and small, should be kept cut down in order that no refuse will be provided for asparagus beetles. Asparagus is very hardy, and no mulching is necessary. It is, however, advisable to provide good drainage, as standing water will cause damage.

## Fertilize Liberally

Asparagus likes a fertile soil. If manure is available, apply a good dressing every winter or just after the cutting season ends. Many growers sow cow peas or soy beans between the rows after the plants are well started in order to supply organic matter and nitrogen. Nitrate of soda at the rate of 100 to 200 pounds per acre, applied early in the spring, helps the production materially. Limestone is a distinct advantage to asparagus.

It pays to grade asparagus carefully and to put the product up in bunches of uniform-sized shoots. Sectional boxes holding 20 or 24 bunches are used for shipping to distant markets. We know you will like asparagus. Give it a trial.

**If your shipment shows loss or damage on arrival, get your express agent to note the same on the bill of lading. Such information helps greatly in collecting claims.**

# HOW TO GROW HORSERADISH

Horseradish produces the largest and most uniform roots when grown in a rich, loose soil. Hard pan will induce excessive branching of the roots, thereby making the roots difficult to grate and lowering their market value. The roots will grow in a large variety of soils, provided they are loose and rich. Moist soils are to be preferred.

## Preparation of Soil

Thorough preparation of the soil is essential for this crop. Fertilizers which are extremely rich in nitrogen should be avoided. Commercial fertilizers which are fairly rich in phosphorus and potash are more desirable. A complete fertilizer containing about 10 per cent of potash, seven per cent of phosphoric acid and four per cent of nitrogen is one of the best. Apply about 600 pounds of such a fertilizer to the acre in the rows before planting the sets. Some growers prefer to apply about 1,000 pounds of such a fertilizer broadcast, believing that larger root systems develop when this method is employed.

## Root Cuttings

Horseradish is propagated by root cuttings. For best results, these should be from one-quarter to one-half inch thick and from four to five inches long. It is such kind that we sell. These cuttings may be redivided into pieces one inch in length.

## Planting

After plowing, the land should be laid off in furrows two and one-half to three feet apart and about three inches deep. If the cuttings are cut to one-inch lengths, lay them in the furrows horizontally. If they are not recut, place them in the furrow vertically, with the large end upward. Then cover them with fresh soil, and compact them thoroughly. Practice clean, level cultivation throughout the season.

## Harvesting

Horseradish makes its best growth during the cool weather in the fall and will stand a great deal of frost. Harvesting should take place in the late fall or early winter. The roots may be raised with a spade or plow. They can be stored in pits until needed. Horseradish usually sells best during about the same season as oysters, but some people use the product throughout the year. Horseradish is a good crop to grow both in home gardens and for market purposes. A few plants will furnish sufficient product for the entire family. Many growers are reaping handsome profits from horseradish. About 10,000 cuttings are required to plant an acre and these should produce from three thousand to six thousand pounds of first class roots, which will sell at from \$150 to \$300.

**Don't compromise on the quality of the stock you buy—poor plants don't pay profits.**

THE object of this catalog is to sell—to sell planting stock of strawberries, asparagus, rhubarb and horseradish—that is ob-

vious. Our big job, of course, is to convince you that what we have to sell is dependable and meets your needs and desires. The foregoing pages contain truthful and helpful information with that intent in view. Have we succeeded in convincing you? Do you feel that our planting stock will give you the results you want? We know that it will. The only question remaining is whether you think so too.

You are going to grow these crops for pleasure and for profit. Pleasure and profit are a worthy combination. You can reap neither pleasure nor profit from puny, weak or unhealthy planting stock. That, too, is obvious.

We confess that we are not in the business solely for the fun of it. We have got to make money out of it. But we must also look at the matter from a long-time standpoint, for we are not a fly-by-night concern. We are in the business to stay. Therefore, your success is vital to us; in fact, our future business depends upon it. That is why we take such pains to

make *Thomas' Pure Bred Plants* all that we claim them to be, and that is why you can buy our plants with absolute confidence.

We have not exaggerated in this catalog. We have given you the plain, straight truth about our business. You can plant *Thomas' Pure Bred Plants* with the assurance that success will follow.

*Now let us have your order.  
The plants will do the rest.*

**W. W. THOMAS CO.**

**Strawberry Plant Farms  
ANNA, ILLINOIS**

